Appl. No. 10/500,256
Amd. Dated September 5, 2005
Reply to Office Action Dated May 4, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 13-21 remain in this application. Claim 12 has been amended. It is believed that no new matter has been added by way of any the amendments provided herein.

The Examiner rejected claims 12-21 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as lacking proper antecedent basis for the term "housing". Applicant has amended claim 12 in order to better explain that the term "housing" refers to the casing, reference numeral 9. Consequently, apertures are to be seen as pointing at reference numeral 21. Characterizing portion of claim 12 has also being removed by way of the current amendments.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 12-20 under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Patey et al ('276) in view of Thompson ('201).

Applicant respectfully disagrees. '276 discloses a system for recording multiple data including a string of modules dedicated to take reading from the same well, and even the same level. The different modules measure pressure, conductivity, temperature, pH and chloride, water level, redox voltage, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and hence salinity.

'276 deals with the arrangement of the different modules, i.e. with the modular manner of packaging the sensors and enabling the sensors to communicate the data to the surface, but '276 does not deal with the content of the modules. As mentioned col. 8, lines 43-46, the instruments and sensors themselves can be proprietary items. Hence, it is only mentioned that windows are provided in the wall of the module through which the water can reach the sensor.

Page 4 of 6

Appl. No. 10/500,256
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'276 is completely silent as to the arrangement of the electrode in the salinity module. '276 is further totally silent as to the technical problem solved by the present invention, hence the need to see effects beyond the casing in order to predict brine invasion. Consequently '276 does not provide teaching as to the spacing of the electrodes in the salinity modules. Passage col. 7, lines 14-24, relates to the vertical separation of the modules themselves, to avoid interferences between different types of measurement (ion measurement and conductivity).

'276 just teaches a way to combine a module such as the one described in '201 with other measurement modules but totally fails to disclose an improved module for measuring the salinity as claimed in claim 12.
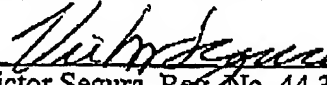
Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Applicant believes this reply to be fully responsive to all outstanding issues and place this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

This paper is submitted in response to the Office Action dated May 4, 2005 for which the three-month date for response was August 4, 2005. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), Applicants petition for an extension of time of two months in which to respond to the Office Action. This two month extension will bring the deadline for response to October 5, 2005, which is within the six-month statutory period (September 4, 2004 is a Sunday). The Commissioner is authorized to charge the fee of $110.00 to Deposit Account No. 50-2183 for the two month extension. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-2183 (Reference Number 21.1017).

Page 5 of 6

Appl. No. 10/500,256
Amd. Dated September 5, 2005
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Respectfully submitted,

Date: ___6- Sept-05___

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